

Snow by DBSean

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Summary: Mike Wheeler knows exactly who he wants to spend his snow day with.

Snow

"Snow"

A/N: To celebrate all the school closings that swept through my state earlier this week, I figured I would write a fanfiction dedicated to Snow Days. So, here you go. Post-Season 2, so please beware of spoilers.

KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK

Eleven frowned upon hearing the secret knock upon the cabin door, confused enough that she didn't immediately use her powers to release the locks and allow the door to swing open on its own, and instead gazed at it inquisitively, as though unsure she had heard anything at all. She was sitting upon the cabin's sole couch, bundled up in blankets and sweaters as she dutifully watched her morning stories, doing her level best to keep warm.

It was January, 1985, in Hawkins, Indiana, and it was snowing. Hopper had woken up an hour early just so he would have time to shovel his 'driveway' and dig out his car before heading into the police station, and Eleven had been there to give him a hug goodbye.

That had been an hour ago. So why would Hopper already be back? Eleven looked around to see if he had perhaps left anything behind, but found nothing in the cabin that would have been worth the drive back in order to retrieve. Shrugging and returning to her soap opera, Eleven waved her hand and telekinetically unlocked the door, allowing Hopper to open it from the outside.

Only it wasn't Jim Hopper who entered the cabin Standing on the other side of the door, dressed in boots, gloves, a ridiculous wool hat, and a winter coat at least one size too small for him, was none other than Mike Wheeler.

"Um...hi!" Mike said with an uncertain smile as he took a hesitant step into the warmth of the cabin. "Surprise?"

Eleven lit up immediately, her stories forgotten. "Mike!"

Mike smiled and laughed as Eleven practically raced across the room and threw herself at him, wrapping her arms around his neck and squeezing him as tightly as she could. Mike happily returned the hug and basked in the sensation of his heart skipping a beat or two as he held her to him, feeling her smile into his chest as her curly hair tickled his chin. It didn't matter how often he saw her or felt her in his arms, it was an experience he lived for, something that kept him going when nothing else could. Eleven was here, she was safe, and she was his.

"Why are you here?" Eleven asked as she finally pulled back, her brow furrowing in confusion as she looked up at her friend. "What about school?"

"Snow day!" Mike responded with a smile.

Eleven frowned at the unfamiliar phrase. "Snow...day?"

"It's what they call it when they cancel school for the day because of snow," Mike answered patiently, kicking himself for not realizing she would have never heard the phrase before, having never attended school in her life. "So, everyone has the day off and, well, I mean, I know I'm not supposed to come over unannounced – or at all – but...I wanted to spend the day with you. I figured maybe you haven't been out in the snow before?"

In reality, Eleven had 'been out in the snow' before, but the experience was not one she hoped to relive. After escaping from the Upside Down that fateful evening in November of 1983, she had found herself wandering the wilderness around Hawkins, and had spent many a night walking through or sleeping in the snow. But that had been before Hopper found her, before he gave her a home and a new life, and now snow did not scare her anymore.

Nonetheless, Eleven hesitated. If Mike spoke the truth about one thing, it was that Hopper would most assuredly not be happy to

discover Mike and Eleven spending the day together, unsupervised, especially when she was still technically supposed to be in hiding.

"We don't have to go far," Mike suddenly said, as if reading her mind. "Like, we can just stay around the cabin. And if we see anyone, we can hide real quick."

Eleven was conflicted. On the one hand, she was trying really hard to respect Hopper's authority and follow all of the rules. She understood why she had to remain hidden, even if she didn't like it, and she *sort of* understood why Hopper didn't want her spending too much alone time with Mike. Something about 'teenage boys,' and 'funny business,' and 'not wanting any goddamn grandchildren anytime soon.'

On the other hand...*Mike*.

Eleven looked up at the young man standing earnestly in front of her, smiling unsurely, nose and cheeks red from the cold, highlighting the freckles that dotted his face, knowing he had surely trudged through miles of snow and wilderness just to make it here, and her heart melted.

"Okay," she said at last, smiling softly as she watched Mike's grin double in size. "Let me get dressed."

Five minutes later, Eleven left the cabin dressed in the warmest gloves and boots she could find, along with the heavy brown coat Hopper had found her the previous winter, closing the door behind her so as not to let any of the cold get in. Mike was waiting for her a few feet away from the cabin, leaning against a tree, and his eyes lit up as he saw her descend from the small porch and walk towards him.

"You look really nice," he said, stuttering slightly as Eleven approached, his cheeks turning red, and not entirely because of the stinging cold in the air.

"I look cold," Eleven corrected him with a smile, feeling her own cheeks redden in response. "Now what?"

The next few hours were amongst the happiest Eleven had

experienced in months.

Mike showed Eleven how to make snow angels by flopping onto his back and swinging his arms and legs back and forth. Eleven had stared at him at first, wondering what in the world he was doing, until he stood up and demonstrated the shape he had made in the snow. Though she recognized the shape as an 'angel,' she still struggled to grasp the meaning behind it.

"Do angels disappear in snow?" she asked quizzically, to which Mike frowned.

"Erm...let's try something else."

Eleven had much more fun building snowmen with Mike, and after they had completed their first one, they engaged in a competition to see who could create the most ridiculous snowman on their own. After almost an hour of packing snow and carefully balancing it in just the right way, Mike was sure he would win when he finished building an upside down snowman, even attaching a pair of upside down branches stretching to the ground as arms, so that the figure resembled a man standing on his head.

All thoughts of victory quickly vanished, however, when he turned around to see Eleven had constructed what could only be described as a snow-monstrosity, complete with three heads, a hole in its chest, and no less than fourteen branches for 'arms.'

"I give up," he said, admitting defeat, causing Eleven to giggle.

"I win?"

"You win," Mike confirmed. "That thing's gonna give me nightmares."

After disassembling their snowmen (the cabin had to appear uninhabited to any potential hikers, after all), Mike and Eleven took a short walk around the perimeter of the cabin, and Mike pointed out all of the animal tracks they could find. Eleven listened intently as Mike explained which tracks belonged to which animal, and soon enough Eleven was pointing them out herself, correcting guessing the tracks before Mike even had a chance to look. They ended up

traveling quite a bit farther than they had originally intended, but they thankfully saw no one, and found their way back to the cabin with little incident.

"Thank you, Mike," Eleven said as the two of them walked back towards the cabin. She reached out and took his gloved hand in hers, shivering slightly at its dampness, but smiling nonetheless.

"You're having fun?" Mike asked, squeezing her hand in his. Eleven nodded. "Good. You cold?"

Eleven shrugged. "A little."

"You want to head back in?"

"Not yet."

"Okay," Mike said again, a sly smile crossing his face, "because there was one more thing I thought you might like to do today."

"Yes?"

"You want to have a snowball fight?"

Eleven frowned in confusion, her brow furrowing at the unfamiliar word. "Snow...ball?"

Mike smiled and let go of her hand. "Come here."

Eleven did so, and watched inquisitively as Mike bent down and scooped up a fair amount of snow from the ground, crushing the white powder into his gloved hand and then rolling it roughly into the size and shape of a baseball.

"This is a snowball," Mike told her, handing it to Eleven so she could look at it.

"Snowball," Eleven repeated, trying out the word as she rolled the snowball around in her hands, looking down at it as though it were the most mysterious thing she had ever seen. "What do you do with it?"

A devilish smirk consumed Mike's freckled features as he reached over and plucked the snowball out of Eleven's hands. "This!"

PAFF!

Eleven gasped, more out of surprise than pain, as she felt the snowball strike her in the chest, where it exploded into a thousand tiny bits and pieces of ice and snow, completely covering her coat in white powder. She looked down at the spot where the snowball struck her with her eyes and mouth wide open in shock, while Mike grinned childishly, already taking a step or two backwards in preparation for what he knew would come next.

"Mike!" she shrieked, as though betrayed. "You hit me!"

"That's how a snowball fight works!" Mike told her, holding back laughter as he continued to back away slowly. He stopped backing away, however, when he saw Eleven look back up at him with tears in her eyes and her lip quivering.

"You hit me..." she repeated, sniffing lightly, her voice little more than a whisper.

Mike immediately felt his eyes widen and his heart sink into his stomach.

"El! El, I was just joking!" he said, his voice cracking as he watched Eleven turn away from him and sniffle loudly, as though retreating back into herself. He immediately began walking back towards her, ready and willing to do anything he could to remedy what had been done.

"I'm so sorry, El, I'm so, so, so sorry," Mike told her as he approached her from behind. "Please don't cry, I didn't mean it, I was just playing and – "

PAFF!

Now it was Mike's turn to freeze in place as a fresh snowball struck him in the chest, covering him in powder and actually causing him to stumble backwards a bit at the impact. Mike's eyes widened as he looked down at the spot where the snowball had struck, before lifting

his eyes back up to find Eleven facing him once more, a mischievous smirk on her face...and freshly packed snow still glistening on her gloved hand.

"You...you hit me," Mike stuttered, realization dawning on him all at once.

"You started it," Eleven responded with a small giggle, and Mike noticed for the first time that her tears had disappeared entirely.

"You pretended to cry so you could hit me!" he said incredulously. "You tricked me!"

Eleven just shrugged, still smiling devilishly. "Mouth-breather."

"Oh, you are so dead!"

Eleven laughed as Mike rolled up another snowball and threw it at her, holding her hands out to try and block it before it could strike. She quickly returned fire, and within moments the two of them were chucking snowballs at each other, laughing and crying out as they pelted one another with snow and ice. Snowballs struck arms and legs and shoulders and backs, and each hit resulted in a shriek or shout, and immediate retaliation.

"Sorry!" Mike shouted as he watched his most recent snowball accidentally strike Eleven in the face, coating her face and curly hair in ice and powder.

"It's okay," Eleven responded as she shook her head and wiped the snow from her face and hair. "I'm sorry, too."

Mike didn't even have time to question Eleven's apology before yet another snowball struck him in the chest, this time one Eleven hadn't even thrown...at least not with her arm.

"Hey, no fair!" Mike cried out as dozens of snowballs suddenly began flying at him from every direction, causing him to throw his arms up in front of his face in order to better protect himself. "You can't use your powers! That's cheating!"

Eleven giggled and wiped the small trail of blood leading from her

nose as she sent more telekinetic snowballs flying at him, rather enjoying the sight of Mike flopping around wildly, trying to defend himself from projectiles he couldn't even see.

"Give up?" Eleven asked as yet another snowball struck him in the back, causing him to burst out in laughter.

"Never!" Mike shouted back, laughing all the while and still trying to dodge the snowballs coming at him from every direction. "I'll never surrender! Do your worst!"

Eleven smiled. "Okay. Look up."

Mike did so, and immediately felt all the blood drain from his face. Hovering in the air five feet above him was a snowball roughly the size of a watermelon. Mike really only had enough time to gulp before Eleven released the snowball from her telekinetic control, allowing gravity to take care of the rest.

WHUMPF!

The giant snowball struck Mike and immediately exploded into a million smaller chunks of ice and snow, completely covering the young man in white powder and literally throwing him off his feet. Eleven laughed as she watched Mike crumple and fall to the ground, buried beneath a veritable avalanche of her triumph.

"Give up now, Mike?" Eleven asked, still smiling all the while.

A moment passed. Then another. Mike didn't get up.

"Mike?" Eleven asked again, this time a little more warily.

Still silence. Still no movement.

"Mike!"

"Achoo!"

Eleven frowned guiltily as she handed Mike another tissue, which he gratefully accepted so he could blow his nose for what felt like the three thousandth time since coming in from out of the snow.

Mike was bundled up in half a dozen blankets in front of the fireplace in the cabin, surrounded by dozens of used tissues. Eleven was currently tending to him as best she could, feeling more than a little responsible for his current predicament. After checking to make sure he was, in fact, still conscious, she had helped walk Mike back into the cabin and settled him in front of the fire to recover. Their coats and boots and gloves lay in a heap on the floor by the doorway.

"Okay?" Eleven asked hesitantly, handing her friend another tissue from her position right beside him.

"Yeah, I'm okay," Mike reassured her with a small smile, accepting the tissue and using it to once again blow his nose. "It's just a cold. I just stayed outside for too long."

"Not my fault?" Eleven asked unsurely.

"No, of course not!" Mike responded immediately before watching her cock an eyebrow in disbelief. "Well...okay, maybe a little."

They both laughed, and Mike sneezed again, and Eleven handed him yet another tissue.

"Sorry," Mike said suddenly, looking away from the fire and shooting Eleven an apologetic look. "I wanted to make today special for you. And here I am, hogging all your blankets and sneezing all over the place."

Eleven just shook her head and scooted closer, trying to find his hand beneath all of the blankets he was using. "It's okay. Sick Mike is better than no Mike. And I had fun."

"Promise?" Mike asked.

"Promise," Eleven said with a smile.

Throwing caution to the wind, she drew back the blankets and quickly crawled up beside Mike, snuggling up next to him and wrapping the blankets around herself as well. She hummed comfortably as she nuzzled her head into his shoulder.

"You're gonna get sick, too," Mike warned her, blushing lightly as he

wrapped his arm around her nonetheless, pulling her in closer.

"Worth it," Eleven said as she snuggled farther still into his chest, feeling the warmth of the fire and the blankets and his arm around her shoulders. She looked up at him, with his damp hair, his red cheeks, his watery eyes and cracked lips and snotty nose, and she felt herself smile. Despite everything, she swore he was as handsome as the day she'd first fallen in love with him. Cold or no cold, snot or no snot, he was her Mike, and she loved him.

Without an iota of hesitation, Eleven leaned up and pressed her lips against his, closing her eyes as she felt him kiss back almost immediately. A bolt of electricity seemed to surge through their bodies every time their lips met, joining them together and sending a shiver of delight running down their spines. But there was also a warmth to it, a comfort and coziness that warmed their damp hair and cold noses and caused their hearts to beat just that little bit faster.

"Thank you for coming over," Eleven whispered after they pulled apart, pulling the blankets tighter around them and snuggling into Mike both for warmth and affection. "I think I like snow days."

"Definitely," Mike whispered back as he smiled down at her and then closed the gap between them once again, never one to pass up another opportunity to kiss the girl he had found in the rain all those long months ago.

'This is perfect,' Eleven thought to herself as she kissed the boy she loved, snuggling further into his embrace and basking in the feel of his lips on hers. Everything besides the two of them just seemed to melt away and disappear, as though the rest of the world was merely a distraction and nothing else mattered. 'This is a perfect moment and nothing could ever ruin it.'

SLAM!

Mike and Eleven both leapt apart and spun around as Hopper burst into the cabin, face red both because of the stinging cold outside and the paternal fury clearly building to a boiling point in his mind.

"Wheeler!" he exclaimed, eyes blazing as Eleven felt Mike pale and shrink beside her. "You have some explaining to do, kid!"

'Well, almost nothing.'

A/N: Thanks for reading! Let me know what you think in the comments!